

# KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## HAGER PRESCHOOL NAMED CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Hager Preschool in the Owensboro Independent school district has been designated as a Kentucky Early Childhood Center of Excellence. This award follows the school's recognition last school year as an Early Childhood Center of Quality, the first step in attaining Center of Excellence status.

The Early Childhood Centers of Quality designation was developed in 2008 as a response to stakeholder recommendations for statewide services to deaf/hard of hearing and blind/visually impaired students. Centers that achieve this distinction will serve as models of practice for other districts in the region through on-site consultation, mentoring and presentations at state, regional and national levels.

Successful applicants for the designation included the following components:

- state-funded preschool program located in a stand-alone facility with an on-site administrator
- on-site services provided to children with visual and hearing impairments
- services provided within regular early childhood classrooms
- national or regional early childhood accreditation
- Kentucky Early Childhood Standards and Parent Guides implemented
- ongoing assessment data utilized in classroom instructional planning
- professional development individualized for the staff.

Additional criteria for Centers of Excellence, implemented during the 2009 school year include:

- Center of Quality designation
- use of the *Building A Strong Foundation* series, which includes preschool standards, parent guides, continuous assessment tools and Quality Self Study
- a minimum, combined average center score of 6.0 on the *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale* (ECERS-R) and meet all substantial portion of the day indicators (1/3 of preschool day consists of child-initiated learning/activities)
- IECE certification held by a majority of teachers
- on-site review visit

Hager Preschool will be recognized and honored through the presentation of a Center of Excellence banner and certificate on Tuesday, November 10 at the school.

(more)

**Visit our Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov>.**

The Calloway County Preschool Center was recognized as Kentucky's first Early Childhood Center of Excellence in June.

Kentucky's preschool education programs are available for all 4-year-old children whose family income is no more than 150 percent of poverty; all 3- and 4-year-old children with developmental delays and disabilities, regardless of income; and other 4-year-old children as placements are available based on district decision. The preschool program is designed to be developmentally appropriate for young children. "Developmentally appropriate" is defined in law to mean that the program focuses on the child's physical, intellectual, social and emotional development, including interpersonal, intrapersonal and socialization skills.

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